

Message Text

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

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-STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PINT, SF, RH, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS) SOUTHERN AFRICA

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INTELLIGENCE APPRAISAL

REFERENCE: SECTO 08150

1. THE FOLLOWING ANALYSIS, PREPARED BY INR AND CLEARED BY AF, IS IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS IN REFTEL. AS REQUESTED, WE ALSO CHECKED WITH DDO.

2. WHAT DO WE KNOW OF SOUTH AFRICAN VIEWS ON THE US-UK PROPOSAL? WHAT WILL BOTHA BE TRYING TO DO IN THE LONDON MEETINGS?

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3. WE THINK THAT SOUTH AFRICAN REACTIONS TO THE US-UK PROPOSALS ARE ESSENTIALLY NEGATIVE, BUT THAT AT THE SAME TIME PRETORIA REALIZES THAT IT IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE ISOLATED AND THAT A POLICY OF OBSTRUCTIONISM WILL NOT WORK. GIVEN THIS MOOD OF APPREHENSION, THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE LIKELY TO OFFER GRUDGING COOPERATION, ALTHOUGH THEY WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO USE EVERY ARGUMENT AT THEIR DISPOSAL TO TRY TO PERSUADE US THAT ENFORCING THE PRESENT PROPOSALS ON SMITH IS AGAINST OUR INTERESTS AS WELL AS THEIRS.

4. THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE EXPECTING ROUGH SLEDDING IN LONDON. THEY APPARENTLY HAD BEEN PREPARING TO COUNTER YOUR AND OWEN'S PROPOSALS WITH PROTESTATIONS THAT WE WERE SELLING OUT THE WHITES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THAT THEY WOULD NOT GO ALONG WITH IT. THIS WAS THE PURPORT OF VORSTER'S SPEECH LAST WEEK TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN

AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT AND DEFENSE MINISTER P.W. BOTHA'S RECENT HARANGUE TO OUR DEFENSE ATTACHE IN PRETORIA.

5. BUT THE SOUTH AFRICANS MAY NOW BE HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS. THEY HAVE TOLD THE BRITISH THAT THEY RECEIVED AN IMPLIED THREAT FROM THE SHAH REGARDING SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPLIES OF OIL TO RHODESIA. FURTHERMORE, WE HAVE HEARD THAT THEY ARE AWARE OF AN ASSESSMENT BY THE RHODESIAN MILITARY STAFF THAT RHODESIA COULD NOT SURVIVE MORE THAN ANOTHER SIX MONTHS AT THE PRESENT RATE OF DECLINE. VORSTER'S SECURITY ADVISER, VAN DEN BERGH, PASSED THESE STORIES TO THE BRITISH, ACCORDING TO A BRITISH INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT. (WE HAVE NOT YET SEEN THE RAW REPORTS ON WHICH THE BRITISH PAPER WAS BASED AND HAVE NO INDEPENDENT EVIDENCE.) VAN DEN BERGH ALSO SAID THAT BOTHA

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WARNED SMITH THAT PRETORIA WOULD TAKE FIRM ACTION-- PRESUMABLY INTERRUPTING THE FLOW OF OIL AND MILITARY SUPPLIES--SHOULD SMITH DELAY PROGRESS TOWARD MAJORITY RULE.

6. WE NOW BELIEVE THAT BOTHA WILL ASSURE YOU AND OWEN THAT SMITH IS INDEED READY TO BEGIN THE PROCESSES THAT WILL LEAD TO MAJORITY RULE (WHICH FOR BOTHA AND SMITH IS PROBABLY LIMITED TO SOME FORM OF AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT), AND THAT PRETORIA WILL MAKE CERTAIN HE KEEPS HIS PROMISE. BOTHA WILL PROBABLY ARGUE THAT PRETORIA IS ALREADY PUTTING AS MUCH PRESSURE ON SMITH AS IT CAN, POSSIBLY MENTIONING THE ABOVE WARNING. HE WILL LIKELY PRESS FOR WESTERN ACQUIESCENCE TOO, IF NOT SUPPORT FOR, THE INTERNAL OPTION. NONETHELESS HE PROBABLY UNDERSTANDS THAT A SETTLEMENT WITHOUT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT IS UNACCEPTABLE TO THE US AND THE UK. THE SOUTH AFRICANS MAY STILL HOPE TO TEMPER THE OSTENSIBLE ABANDONMENT OF POWER BY THE WHITES ENVISAGED IN THE US-UK PLAN, WHICH THEY WILL ARGUE IS TANTAMOUNT TO THE WHITES YIELDING CONTROL OVER THEIR OWN FATES. BOTHA ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL URGE YOU AND OWEN TO POSTPONE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PLAN AS WELL AS FURTHER MEETINGS WITH THE NATIONALISTS AND FRONT-LINE STATES, ARGUING THAT THEY WOULD CONVEY THE IMPRESSION

THAT WE ARE PROCEEDING WITHOUT GIVING SMITH A CHANCE TO HAVE HIS SAY. THIS, HE WILL CONTEND, WILL CAUSE A LOSS

OF WHITE CONFIDENCE IN SMITH AND WILL DEPRIVE HIM OF THE TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY HE MUST WIN IN ORDER TO LAUNCH HIS OWN EFFORTS TOWARD ESTABLISHING MAJORITY RULE.

7. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ON SOUTH AFRICAN REACTIONS TO PRESS SPECULATION ABOUT THE POSSIBLE USE OF A UN FORCE IN RHODESIA DURING THE TRANSITION, BUT WE WOULD EXPECT BOTHA TO ARGUE STRONGLY AGAINST IT ON THE BASIS OF THEIR OWN AND RHODESIAN WHITE FEARS THAT COMMUNIST ELEMENTS

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WOULD HELP MAKE UP SUCH A FORCE. THEY WILL PROBABLY ARGUE THAT A JOINT RHODESIAN-GUERRILLA CONSTABULARY UNDER BRITISH COMMANDERS IS FAR PREFERABLE, WHATEVER THE PERILS OF PERMITTING ARMED GUERRILLAS INSIDE RHODESIA, SINCE RHODESIAN REGULARS KNOW THEIR OWN COUNTRY, CAN BE COUNTED ON TO OBEY ORDERS FROM A BRITISH RESIDENT COMMISSIONER, AT LEAST AGAINST MARAUDING AND DISOBEDIENT GUERRILLAS, AND WILL PROVE WILLING AND ABLE TO SERVE A BLACK GOVERNMENT THAT RESPECTS THE CONSTITUTION. APART FROM THEIR VISCERAL DISTRUST OF THE UN, THE SOUTH AFRICANS WILL BE LOOKING AT ANY PROPOSAL FOR UN INVOLVEMENT IN RHODESIA AS A PRECEDENT FOR NAMIBIA, WHERE THEIR INTERESTS ARE EVEN MORE CLOSELY INVOLVED.

8. BOTHA WILL PROBABLY ASK THE US AND UK TO LAY TO REST SOUTH AFRICAN AND RHODESIAN DOUBTS ABOUT GUARANTEES FOR THE WHITES--LAND OWNERSHIP, SPECIALLY ELECTED WHITE SEATS IN THE PARLIAMENT, AND PENSIONS, BY GOING ON THE RECORD IN STRONG PUBLIC STATEMENTS. HE IS LIKELY TO WARN THAT EQUIVOCATION ON THESE ISSUES, ALONG WITH THE QUESTION OF FOREIGN TROOPS ON RHODESIAN SOIL, WILL ONLY DRIVE LARGE NUMBERS OF WHITES TO PREFER THE DO-OR-DIE OPTION POSED BY SMITH'S RIGHT-WING OPPONENTS TO ONE WHICH SMACKS OF TOTAL SURRENDER.

9. WHAT IS THE LATEST INFORMATION WE HAVE ON THE RHODESIAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN? IS THERE ANY CHANGE IN OUR ESTIMATE OF THE LIKELY OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION?

10. BARRING ADVERSE DEVELOPMENTS, SUCH AS SERIOUS MILITARY OR DIPLOMATIC REVERSSES, WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK THAT SMITH WILL PROBABLY RESTORE HIS TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY (LOST WITH THE DEFECTON OF 12 RIGHT-WING MEMBERS) IN THE AUGUST 31

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ELECTION. THIS ASSESSMENT, WHICH THE BRITISH SHARE, IS NOT BASED UPON HARD INFORMATION REGARDING THE CONDUCT OF THE CAMPAIGN THUS FAR, BUT THE ASSUMPTION THAT MOST

RHODESIANS WANT A SETTLEMENT THAT WILL QUICKLY RELIEVE THEM OF THE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC COSTS OF THE WAR AND THE UNBEARABLE UNCERTAINTY IMPOSED BY TIGHTENING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES ON RHODESIA. FOR MOST RHODESIAN WHITES, SUPPORT FOR A SETTLEMENT MEANS SUPPORT FOR SMITH, BUT PROBABLY NOT FOR AN ARRANGEMENT THAT WOULD INCLUDE THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. WERE THIS SEEN AS PART OF SMITH'S PLAN, A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF WHITES WOULD PROBABLY THROW IN THEIR LOT WITH SMITH'S RIGHT-WING OPPOSITION.

11. SMITH'S VULNERABILITIES ARE ESSENTIALLY ON HIS RIGHT. EVEN IF THE COALITION OF RELATIVELY LIBERAL SPLINTER PARTIES WON ANY SEATS, WHICH WE DO NOT EXPECT, THEY WOULD LIKELY SUPPORT SMITH IF THEY WERE CONVINCED THAT HE WOULD PASS POWER TO THE BLACK MAJORITY. FOURIE AND BOTHA WERE NOT CONFIDENT OF A SMITH TWO-THIRDS VICTORY, FOURIE TOLD BOWDLER AFTER THEIR VISIT TO SALISBURY. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT CAUSED THIS GLOOMY ASSESSMENT, BUT IT COULD AS WELL BE TACTICAL--TO GET THE US AND THE UK TO GIVE SMITH AS MUCH LEEWAY AS POSSIBLE UNTIL ELECTIONS--AS A

GENUINE OPINION. IN ANY CASE, OUR OWN JUDGMENT IS THAT SMITH WOULD WIN THE NECESSARY TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT SO LONG AS MOST WHITES CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT HE WILL NOT SURRENDER TO THE GUERRILLAS.

12. WE BELIEVE THAT SMITH, ONCE HE HAD WON HIS TWO-THIRDS MARGIN IN THE ELECTION, WOULD UNLEASH AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT ALONG SOMETHING LIKE THE FOLLOWING LINES. IT WOULD

--IMMEDIATELY INTRODUCE BLACK LEADERS INTO THE CABINET, PERHAPS INCLUDING A DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER;

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--SET UP A COMMISSION TO WRITE A NEW CONSTITUTION PROVIDING FOR MAJORITY RULE IN 1978;

--PROVIDE FOR ELECTIONS ON A BROADENED BUT NOT YET ONE-MAN-ONE-VOTE BASIS OPEN TO ALL NATIONALIST GROUPS, INCLUDING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND ITS GUERRILLA MEMBERS;

--POSSIBLY EVEN GUARANTEE THAT SMITH WILL STEP DOWN ONCE A BLACK GOVERNMENT IS FORMED.

WE HAVE NO FIRM EVIDENCE THAT THIS IS SMITH'S PLAN AND DO NOT KNOW WHETHER BOTHA ANTICIPATES SUCH A SCENARIO. BUT IF IT COMES TO PASS, WE SUSPECT THAT PRETORIA WOULD CONSIDER IT AS KEEPING ITS SIDE OF ANY BARGAIN IT REACHES WITH THE US AND UK.

14. WHAT INFORMATION DO WE HAVE ON WHAT THE FRONT-LINE PRESIDENTS THINK OF WHAT THEY UNDERSTAND TO BE THE US-UK

PLAN?

15. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ON WHAT THE FRONT-LINE PRESIDENTS THINK OF WHAT THEY UNDERSTAND TO BE THE US-UK PLAN. HENCE, WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE ON WHAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR IN SUCH PROPOSALS.

16. ZAMBIA, WHICH HAS THE MOST TO GAIN FROM A QUICK SETTLEMENT, WOULD NEVERTHELESS, INSIST ON CONVINCING EVIDENCE THAT IT WOULD LEAD IRREVERSIBLY TO MAJORITY RULE WITHIN A REASONABLY SHORT TIME. HENCE, KAUNDA WILL REQUIRE SMITH'S OUSTER. MAJORITY RULE WOULD ALMOST

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ROLE FOR THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, OR AT LEAST FOR NKOMO'S FACTION. HE WOULD ALSO REQUIRE THAT SMITH'S SECURITY FORCES BE SUPPLANTED BY THOSE OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. HE WOULD PROBABLY ACCEPT A UN CONSTABULARY ROLE BECAUSE HE FEARS CIVIL WAR BETWEEN ZAPU AND ZANU GUERRILLAS AND THE PROSPECT OF ZAMBIAN INVOLVEMENT THEREIN.

17. MOZAMBIQUE MAY HAVE EVEN STRONGER REASONS FOR DESIRING A QUICK SETTLEMENT SINCE IT ALREADY IS A BATTLE-GROUND. BUT MACHEL MAY BE EVEN MORE INSISTENT ON A NEARLY TOTAL ABDICATION OF POWER BY SMITH AND THE WHITES. HE WOULD PROBABLY INSIST THAT A UN FORCE HAVE SUBSTANTIAL "PROGRESSIVE" MEMBERSHIP IN ORDER TO PREVENT TOO GREAT WESTERN INFLUENCE IN THE CRITICAL AREA OF SECURITY. MACHEL MAY NOW BE LESS PARTIAL TO ZANU THAN HE HAD BEEN, OWING TO ITS INTERNAL DIVISIONS AND ONLY MEDIOCRE BATTLE-FIELD PERFORMANCE. HENCE, HE MAY NOT BE INCLINED TO PERMIT ZANU GUERRILLAS TO OPERATE FROM MOZAMBIQUE ONCE A SETTLEMENT WAS REACHED, PARTICULARLY IF HIS MENTOR, NYERERE, SUPPORTED AN AGREEMENT.

18. TANZANIA WILL LIKELY SUPPORT THE PLAN TO THE DEGREE THAT IT WEAKENS RHODESIAN RESOLVE, BUT NOT IN ALL PARTICULARS. NYERERE WOULD OPPOSE MEASURES THAT APPEAR TO BE DESIGNED TO PRESERVE THE BASIC ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ORDER

THAT OBTAINS IN RHODESIA, EVEN WHILE POWER IS PASSED TO BLACKS. HENCE, HE MAY ACCEPT A UN ROLE, BUT NOT A RHODESIAN ARMY ROLE. HE MAY ACCEPT THE GENERAL PROPOSITIONS INHERENT IN THE ZIMBABWE DEVELOPMENT FUND, BUT NOT THE IMPLICIT STRICTURES THAT MIGHT BE SEEN TO CONSTRAIN AN INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT. FINALLY, NYERERE WILL REMAIN SUSPICIOUS OF SOUTH AFRICAN COOPERATION, SHOULD IT BE PRODUCED BY THE WEST, FEARING THAT PRETORIA WILL HAVE EXTRACTED GUARANTEES OF ITS OWN FROM THE US AND THE UK.

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19. BOTSWANA WILL MOST WILLINGLY SUPPORT THE US-UK PLAN, ACCORDING TO TWO HIGH OFFICIALS, AND WILL HOPE THAT IT PRODUCES A MODERATE ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT. BUT IT WILL NOT GET FAR OUT OF STEP FROM ITS FRONT-LINE COHORTS, WHATEVER ITS APPRECIATION OF ITS OWN BEST INTERESTS.

20. BASICALLY, THESE VIEWS WILL BE CRYSTALLIZED AT THE FORTHCOMING MEETING OF THE FRONT-LINE PRESIDENTS. SINCE NYERERE WILL BE THE PARTICIPANT MOST CONVERSANT WITH THE PLAN, HIS VIEWS WILL HAVE SPECIAL WEIGHT. IN GENERAL, WE THINK HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PROPOSALS IS ONE OF CAUTION AND WATCHFUL WAITING, BUT CERTAINLY NOT REPEAT NOT ONE OF HOSTILITY. HE THINKS IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE THE WEST ON THE SIDE OF A SETTLEMENT EFFORT THAT GENERALLY MEETS AFRICAN REQUIREMENTS, HOWEVER.; MUCH HE MAY BE UNCERTAIN ABOUT SOME OF ITS DETAILS OR WHAT THE FUTURE MAY HOLD FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS. CHRISTOPHER

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